EC funds for rural upliftment

1872. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that European Commission has sanctioned funds for upliftment of rural poor in India;

(b) if so, whether it is a grant to Government or to private agencies like NGOs;

(c) what are the guidelines for applying to EC for grants; and

(d) whether all agencies are eligible to approach them or they have to go through the Government for such grants?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. European Commission has been providing grant assistance for upliftment of rural poor in India. The assistance is being provided by European Commission through Government of India as well as to the NGOs directly.

(c) and (d) There are no specific guidelines for providing grant assistance to State Government/Central Projects. The State Governments and Central Ministries can seek grant assistance for identified projects through the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India in the sector of Primary Education, Basic Health & Environment. European Commission is also providing assistance to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), who can approach it direclty, subject to fulfilment of certain conditions made available to them by the European Commission Delegation's Office at New Delhi.